



# Memorandum

**TO:** CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Mayor Sam Liccardo  
Vice Mayor Herrera  
Councilmember Kalra  
Councilmember Matthews  
Councilmember Oliverio

**SUBJECT: GREEN VISION 2014 ANNUAL  
REPORT AND 2015 WORKPLAN:  
FROM "GREEN VISION" TO  
"GREEN FOCUS"**

**DATE:** April 17, 2015

Approved

*Rose Herrera* *Marga Matthews* *Sam Liccardo* *4-17-15*  
*Herluigi Oliverio* *Asst. Cal*

## RECOMMENDATION

Approve the 2014 Green Vision Annual Report and 2015 Workplan. The City Manager is further directed to:

1. Prioritize and focus on two overarching goals of the Green Vision: (1) ensuring a more sustainable water supply, and (2) reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
2. Within our sustainable water supply goals:
  - a. include measures relating to the implementation of potable reuse of recycled water, and
  - b. include measures relating to the *per capita* reduction of water use citywide.
3. Within our greenhouse gas reduction goals:
  - a. Broaden measures of usage of renewable sources of electricity to include the residential and business community (rather than merely City operations);
  - b. Incorporate transportation mode shift as a key component, along with other sources of GHG emissions from our built environment.
4. Focus annual progress reports to the Transportation and Environment Committee and the Council on accomplishments associated with these two priorities.
5. Remaining goals of the Green Vision should remain within their respective department's workplans, and reported annually to the Council through the performance-based budget process and related budget study sessions

## BACKGROUND

Since the adoption of the Green Vision in 2007, the City has continued to garner national attention for its environmentally sustainable approaches to green building, waste, energy, water, trails, and transportation. The ten long-term goals of the Green Vision have supported the growth of our clean-tech economy, and have set us on a path to becoming more environmentally sustainable.

With a new Council and Mayor, we have an opportunity to re-focus and recalibrate our efforts. While celebrating the successes of the Green Vision to date, we also recognize that our City primarily faces two environmental crises: climate change, and a chronic drought. The substantial exertion of time and effort necessary to track and report on every one of the ten Green Vision goals can take our focus off these twin crises, and it appears worthwhile for us—at least temporarily—to narrow our efforts.

California is in its fourth year of drought. The City has already made important strides in the area of recycled water, supplying roughly 14 million gallons daily for landscaping or manufacturing purposes. We need to do much more, however, to ensure a reliable, safe supply of drinking water. We can no longer rely upon imported water from state or federally-regulated sources; our only reliable source of water, in fact, lies beneath us, in our groundwater aquifers.

Troublingly, the Santa Clara Valley Water District estimated a 13% decrease in this groundwater supply in 2013 alone, meaning that we could completely deplete this source within 10 years.

We can now produce clean, recycled water that surpasses state standards with the opening of the Silicon Valley Advanced Water Purification Center. Pumping this recycled water into our groundwater to restore our underground basins ensures that San José has a safe and secure water supply. Our Green Focus goals should reflect this.

In addition to Goal 6 of the Green Vision, "Recycle or beneficially reuse 100 percent of our wastewater," we also need to reduce water usage among our residents and within City facilities. Simply expanding our current water supply won't satisfy our pressing needs. Particularly since we now operate under a statewide edict to reduce per capita water consumption, we should incorporate this measure within our Green Focus goal.

In light of the looming crisis of climate change, of course, we cannot afford to overlook San José's energy-related goals. The Second, Third, and Seventh goals of the Green Vision most directly relate to our efforts to reduce GHG emissions. By focusing on energy conservation, renewables, and transportation mode shift, San Jose can lead the nation by example in environmental sustainability.